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L E T T E R

ON

T H E R E B E L L I O N ,

TO

A CITIZEN OF WASHINGTON,

FROM

A CITIZEN OF PHILADELPHIA.

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PHILADELPHIA:  
JOHN CAMPBELL, PUBLISHER,  
419 CHESTNUT STREET.

1862.

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THE following Letter was written, five months ago, in the course of a friendly and familiar correspondence with a prominent and very estimable citizen of Washington. In addition to the subjoined note from Mr. Vaux, the writer was requested, and even urged, to publish the Letter, some time since, the gentleman to whom it was addressed giving his consent. But he did not think it could add anything to all that had been so much better said and written by others, on the same great subject, and refrained from publishing it.

He has determined now to let it go for what it may be worth. The interval that has elapsed since the Letter was written, may at least serve to show that the writer has evinced no anxiety, and been in no hurry, to get into print.

Though the first part about the "Trent" be not applicable at this moment, the writer feels as much confidence now, as he did then, in the soundness of the sentiments, and in publishing the Letter, prefers to publish it entire.

B. R.

MOUNT AIRY, 31st May, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR :

Yesterday I heard of a letter written by you not long since to a friend in Washington, said, by a mutual friend who saw it, to possess peculiar interest just now. It contains, as I hear, most interesting extracts from the writings of Southern statesmen on the Constitution and the Union, and also gives your exposition of your father's views on the same subject, and what you suppose would have been his opinions in the present crisis.

A wish has been expressed that a copy of this letter should be furnished for private circulation and perusal of those who feel an interest in this subject.

Thus prefatory let me just ask if you have any objection to furnish a copy of this letter, or would your correspondent object?

Always very truly your friend,

RICHARD VAUX.

PHILADELPHIA, 30th January, 1862.

To BENJAMIN RUSH, Esq.,  
MOUNT AIRY.

## L E T T E R.

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MOUNT AIRY, NEAR PHILADELPHIA,  
26th December, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:

YOU rightly attribute to me, in your very friendly and gratifying letter of the 23d November, the authorship of the articles I lately put under cover to you in "The Press," signed "An American Citizen," justifying and applauding the act of Captain Wilkes in the capture of the Rebel envoys. The articles do not at all merit all you say of them, but I am very glad to find that you concur with me in the sentiments they imperfectly embody, as indeed I was very sure you would.

That the case of the "Trent," is in effect the case of the "Caroline" over again, in all its main features, with the single difference, that in the latter, the result was accomplished with unexampled savage barbarity, while in the former, the forbearance of the American Commander was as conspicuous as his patriotism, no one can seriously doubt. In the case of the "Caroline," a large armed British force stealthily invaded, in the middle of the night, an American steamboat, moored to the American shore, jumped on her deck like demons, surprised, maimed, and slaughtered the unarmed sleeping crew and passengers; set fire to the vessel, and sent her in flames headlong over the Falls of Niagara! Was there ever such an outrage? The offence was, that the steamboat had been employed on that day, in conveying men and munitions of war from the Ameri-

can to the British frontier, to assist the Canadian rebels. But what sort of Prize Court was that into which Britain took the offending vessel? Verily, she made short work of it, for she sought only the foaming cataract. Our remonstrance she treated with scorn. A quarter of a century has well-nigh elapsed, and it remains to this hour unanswered! We pocketed the affront, for we felt that enormous, and most inhuman and unjustifiable as was the measure of retaliation, we were to blame in the outset. The good sense of the country prevailed in the end, and the affair was eventually forgotten.

But now the tables are turned. Britain, in utter violation of her Sovereign's Proclamation of Neutrality, extends the convoy and protection of her flag to two of the acknowledged leaders of a great rebellion in this country, proceeding, with a retinue, to European shores, to seek the aid of Europe in promoting the dismemberment of our Empire. A spirited officer of the American Navy, learning the facts, intercepts the vessel on the high seas, and while abstaining from any indignity to the British Flag, and treating with marked consideration, and even courtesy, the rest of the passengers and crew, simply causes the avowed Rebel emissaries, and a part of their retinue, to be removed on board his ship, to be dealt with as the Government of the United States should direct; the British ship being detained only long enough to effect their removal, and immediately suffered to proceed.

Such, in a word, is the case of the "Trent," as compared with the case of the "Caroline." Yet it has been whispered for a week, that the rumored demands of Britain for "reparation," and the restitution of the persons of the Rebel envoys to the protection of her



flag, on the alleged ground that their removal from a British deck was an affront to Britain, and in violation of public law,—demands made while her fleets and armies are believed to be actually hovering off our very shores, and bristling with preparation for the alternative,—that these demands are to be immediately complied with by our Government.

Should such rumored demands and whispers prove well founded, may the future historian of America justify to posterity this act of the nineteenth century. In one respect, indeed, and one only, posterity may suffer it to pass. ANYTHING; yes! anything, no matter what, to enable the Government effectually to put down the Rebellion, and forever re-establish the supremacy of the Constitution and Union. I certainly did not help to make Mr. Lincoln President. I am of the Democratic Party, and have been all my life, and did all I could to prevent his election. But he is the President now, and his duties, responsibilities and difficulties are stupendous. Let no honest Democrat embarrass him now, while he battles manfully with these. If even this great sacrifice be necessary to the mighty consummation, let us submit to it. Goldsmith, in dedicating to Johnson one of the most celebrated of the creations of his genius, says: "*By inscribing this slight performance to you, I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself.*" Should the genius of America dedicate to mankind a similar drama, less from apprehension of a foreign foe, than from an inflexible determination to preserve now, at any cost, the integrity of her own Empire, "*She Stoops to Conquer*" may yet be played upon a far broader theatre than England dreams of, and with corresponding results to mankind.

I say this in no feeling of blind hostility to England,

or as a mere echo of the outcry which would denounce her on all occasions. I have no such feeling towards her. I have passed too many years of my life in that country, and mingled too long and intimately with her people, of whom I have too many agreeable recollections, not to be able to estimate properly the greatness of the one, and high qualities of the other. But while I would render every just tribute to that nation whose language we speak, and whose spirit and pride we inherit, I know enough of her to be quite sure that she will respect us the more, as we respect ourselves, and this I trust we shall never cease to do, whatever be the issue of this case of the Trent. I consider her whole course in the case to have been most unjustifiable, and the amiable and enlightened Queen of England, at one time admitted as much, in her dignified rebuke to some of her overheated ministers.

That the articles I sent you have been the means of reviving a correspondence, to me always so agreeable, and now so long neglected, is the only merit I can claim for them, but this at least I may fairly regard as the best evidence that they have accomplished one good result.

Though now beforehand with me, I assure you it has been in my thoughts repeatedly since this wicked rebellion began, to take the pen to you for a few of the reflections which, crowding at first upon the mind with the rapidity and novelty belonging to such an unnatural event, stunned, while they startled, the great body of the American people; which now so overload it and oppress the heart with their accumulated weight of indignation as of sorrow, that it is difficult to say which feeling is uppermost in contemplating the enormities already perpetrated by the instigators and instruments of the crime; and which reflections, while the stupen-

dous iniquity may well demand, as it has received, the triumphant exposure and scathing condemnation of the highest intellects in the land, will equally find vent from the tongues and pens of the humblest. Hence, I will not let the old year go out—a year which, in after ages, will be referred to as the darkest, but will yet, I believe, precede the brightest and most exultant period of American history—without recalling myself to you by this letter, as well to thank you very sincerely for yours, as to give expression to a few of those thoughts as they occur to me, however imperfect and inadequate.

Your allusions to my late father are in the spirit of your warm friendship for him, and are very grateful to me. Yours and his was a friendship of many long years; a friendship he greatly valued, as he did the qualities of his friend, for he well knew, as I knew, that the former was as disinterested as sincere; that it was independent of, as it outlived, his public stations, though for nearly a quarter of a century public station was his lot, and that in the latter, he ever found congenial sentiments. You are now among the very few left with whom I can indulge such reflections, and you will not be surprised that I address myself to you now, and on such topics as these, with peculiar interest.

How my father, who, as a boy, remembered the majestic presence of Washington here in Philadelphia; who, from his youth up, cherished for that mighty name a veneration, which so ripened with reflection and knowledge that it became in after years like the faith of the martyrs, for I have heard him say he believed that if ever Providence could have been supposed to permit to mortals a connecting link to higher and purer intelligences, that link was Washington; who, as a young man, was first called to the public service by Mr. Madi-

son, and grew up with a reverence for his wisdom, listening in the counsels of his cabinet, and the intimacy of his private friendship, to those calm and clear expositions of the Constitution which have been revived with such an overwhelming power of truth during the past year, and whom he got to indicate, in his own handwriting, on the leaves of a copy of *The Federalist*, now in my library, the identical articles he there wrote, with occasional manuscript notes to some; who, for twelve years, served under those great men and patriots, Monroe and John Quincy Adams, and stood up for Jackson with all the energy of his character and strength of his pen, as far as he possessed these, when Jackson crushed Nullification, though up to that time politically opposed to him; who was the colleague of Clay in John Quincy Adams's cabinet, and had always the highest appreciation of Webster; and whose highest admiration for those great names was that they were among the pillars of the UNION; who has left it on record, on innumerable occasions, that at all times, and under all circumstances, at home, abroad, in peace, in war, under all administrations, Republican or Federal, Whig or Democratic, our first and last and highest duty is to that UNION; and among whose last aspirations on human subjects, as I and others of his family, seated by his bedside, heard them from his feeble lips as life was ebbing, were the glory and perpetuity of that UNION; how my father, had he lived to witness the scenes of the past twelve months and those now passing, would have indignantly thought and felt, and spoken and written, and acted under them all; what he would have thought of the preposterous and monstrous doctrine of Secession, its authors and teachers; how he would have exposed the miserable pretexts and subter-

fuges *et id jugglery omne* of those who are now seeking, under the guise of that doctrine, to grasp power by the destruction of this nation; how he would have done all this, and more, for he was not afraid of them, and they knew it, you probably can tell as well as any one now living.

Yet my father was always the friend of the South. It was natural that he should be so. He married at the South, not in the remote region first steeped in the guilt of this rebellion, but still in a Southern State. He was first called into the public councils by Southern men. Some of his earliest, longest, and most agreeable associations were with the eminent names I have recalled. Several of his children were born, and all first reared, surrounded by influences, connections, and delightful early friendships, that centred in Southern homes, which they have since cultivated and cherished. And he saw and felt, as hundreds of thousands of others in the great North and West and Middle, saw and felt, (fifteen hundred thousand, says Mr. Holt), that the South had been wronged by the fanatical discussions in Congress and elsewhere, and the infamous Abolition press of the country, for more than twenty years; and therefore he stood up for the South, as it was right he should do, *as long as the South was the injured party.*

I inherited his predilection, but with it a predilection for a sentiment, which I can even now recall, as with kindling eye and emphasis, and often in tones of emotion, he was wont to enforce it upon his sons, even in the days of boyhood. It was the sentiment of Decatur, one of the noblest ever uttered: **OUR COUNTRY, RIGHT OR WRONG.** Can it be doubted, that had he lived, he would have been in this deplorable contest for **THE UNION, RIGHT OR WRONG,** for he had no other **COUNTRY;**



he would have felt the decision in his pulse, as Fisher Ames said; that if right, he would have insisted that it was the solemn and paramount duty of all to sustain and preserve it; if wrong, that it was no less the solemn and paramount duty of all to correct the wrong, through the medium of the Constitution and the Laws. Above all, that with the Supreme Court and Congress on its side, and at that time a million and a half of voters in the non-slaveholding States, the conduct of the South in 1860, in undertaking to redress her grievances by breaking up the Union, was in the highest degree unreasonable, fanatical, treasonable, and criminal, and that it deserved the severest infliction of the "rod," which even in 1786, Mr. Jefferson said the States would have to see, and perhaps to feel.\*

The veneration I inherited as above for the great Union which alone made us a Nation was stronger than any other sentiment. Hence the first shot that boomed across Charleston harbor, on the 12th of April last, as it reverberated to these shores which first echoed the shouts of the 4th July, 1776, and the 17th September, 1787, scattered to the winds the predilections of a lifetime for that entire portion of our country, which had thus dared to erect itself in open and shameless revolt against that far greater, and more glorious, and more beloved Union.

The defensive power possessed by the South in Congress, in the very first article of the Constitution, providing that representatives and direct taxes should be apportioned among the States, on the same basis of

\* Mr. Jefferson writing to Mr. Monroe. 11th August, 1786. says: "The States must see the rod; perhaps it must be felt by some of them."

population,—the “*three-fifths of all other persons*” clause,—a power generously conceded to her by the North, as Mr. Everett has shown, *without compensation in the Presidential election*, was of itself sufficient to protect the South against all the alleged encroachments, for all time, of all the other sections of the Union. That she should have voluntarily surrendered this power by the treasonable withdrawal of her Senators and Representatives from Congress last December, and at the beginning of this year, like the refusal of some, who remained, to vote on propositions of compromise, is only another proof of her predetermined purpose to break up the Union, and destroy the Government.

Let me for a moment recall what is said by the accomplished Orator of New England under this striking view of the subject, in his elaborate and masterly oration in New York, on the 4th of July last :

“What number of representatives, beyond the proportion of their free population, the South has elected in former Congresses, I have not computed. In the last Congress she was represented by *twenty members in behalf of her slaves*, being nearly one-eleventh part of the entire House. As the increasing ratio of the two classes of the population has not greatly varied, it is probable that the South, in virtue of her slaves, has always enjoyed about the same proportionate representation in the House in excess of that accruing from her free population. As it has rarely happened, in our political divisions, that important measures have been carried by large majorities, this excess has been quite sufficient to assure the South a majority on all sectional questions. It enabled her to elect her candidate for the Presidency in 1800, and thus effect the great poli-

tical revolution of that year, and is sufficient of itself to account for that approach to a monopoly of the Government, which she has ever enjoyed.”

You may well speak as you do of Mr. Holt, to whom I had occasion to refer in one of the published articles I sent you. He well deserves all you say of him. I think, with you, that he is one of our very first men. His great abilities as a speaker and writer, and his knowledge on all subjects, are equalled only by his unpretending modesty; and his heroic devotion to the cause of the Union, and lofty patriotism, will secure for him a lasting place in the hearts of his loyal countrymen.\*

A Southern man, born and reared under Southern institutions, and surrounded all his life by Southern influences, Mr. Holt has been gifted with power to soar beyond the contracted realm of Southern sophistry, and with courage to proclaim and maintain his position. He has spoken out for the Union in a tone not less convincing than commanding, and, like Everett and Motley, has conclusively shown that the high intellect of the nation, its power and strength of argument, its educated and polished mind, its most eloquent tongues, all its most profound and disciplined pens, are as unmistakably enlisted in behalf of the Union, as the uncounted hosts who, from the forests of Maine to the limits of Western Virginia, and his own Kentucky, have sworn to preserve it, and now stand forth everywhere, a mighty phalanx, ready to seal that oath with the blood of patriots and heroes.

\* I am informed that Mr. Holt's great speech in New York, at the Irving Hall, was read aloud at social assemblages in Philadelphia, and received with emotion, as well it may have been.



Kentucky and Western Virginia! Western Virginia and Kentucky! Henceforth they will be of the crown jewels of the land! Tremendous have been the exertions to seduce them from their allegiance, and nobly has each, like Maryland, Missouri, and Eastern Tennessee, dashed aside the treacherous cup. All honor to the heroic sons of each and all those patriot Commonwealths. Truly have they risen up in the judgment with this generation of the South, and have condemned it. In Western Virginia it would really seem as though the mighty spirit of Washington, like the descending sun, had lingered last, if not longest; and was now animating the hearts and minds of the people with a glory similar to the parting rays of that luminary, when all nature reflects its transcendent splendors, and is gorgeously lighted up with the crimson and gold of the horizon.

Oh no! This great Federal Union, at first that "little speck," immortalized by Burke, "scarcely visible in the mass of the national interest—that small seminal principle, rather than a formed body,"—was never born of Revolution, cradled in suffering, and reared to such vigorous manhood as to have achieved "in the course of a single life," as Burke predicted, the "progressive increase of improvement brought on by varieties of people, a succession of civilizing settlements, and a commerce which attracts the envy of the world," which it took England "seventeen hundred years" to grow to—such a nation could never, never have been born to die so soon. True, we are now grievously afflicted, and sorely tried, and in words that have scarcely passed from the lips of a distinguished divine, of whom this city is proud, "the kings of the earth shake the head, and shoot out the lip, and laugh us to scorn." But we

are, after all, only passing through those “*constant and sharp antagonisms*,” which the same eloquent minister of God’s word, has shown to be the law of all growing things. “The eagle’s mighty wing,” as he beautifully has it, “is nerved by the hurricane. Human progress is ever like that of a ship beating to windward in the very eye of the tempest. Even Christianity, from its rude cradle, down through all its mighty triumphs in long antiquity, has fulfilled the same law, and grown strong through *antagonisms*. So that the consummation of God’s most stupendous purpose, was achieved, not by the ministry of singing angels, but through human antagonisms, *with treachery and a cross.*”

Oh, no! The Union, thrice favored of heaven’s most exuberant promise, is not dying. It will survive even the tremendous conflict now raging, and unborn generations will celebrate its restored ascendancy. “All empires,” says the same profound and philosophic statesman, who held up to Lord Bathurst that dazzling vision, “have been cemented in blood.” Our empire cannot expect to escape; and while we had fondly hoped, at one time, that no such cement would be needed to its internal and domestic structure, and recoiled from such, it has been made too painfully manifest now, that “blood must be mingled with the sacrifices” made to preserve it. But it WILL be preserved; yes, to distant ages, and will be stronger and more beloved than ever, as dear-bought experience shall have confirmed its inestimable blessings, and the untold miseries of their loss;

“For it so falls out,

That what we have, we prize not to the worth,  
 Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack’d and lost,  
 Why then we rack the value; then we find  
 The virtue, that possession would not show us  
 Whiles it was ours.”

No wonder that those brave fellows, inured to battle and storm, who helped to achieve the late brilliant victory at Port Royal, *wept* when they first saw the old flag once more run up on the soil first polluted by the rebellion.\*

Among these blessed results, the hitherto and now fiercely opposing sections of our country will come to know each other as never yet before, and one to entertain and manifest for the other a much loftier and more enduring respect. The South will have discovered that the high qualities she has heretofore professed to value, reside among those who have not heretofore made daily boast of them; that truth, courage, the sense of honor, the quick instincts of gentlemen, the refinements of cultivated and polished intercourse, all those graces of character and charms of life, of which, with some self-complacency, they had supposed themselves sole possessors, are indigenious to Northern breasts and Northern homes. The North in turn will do justice to the South, when the latter shall have discovered her great error, and atoned for her great crime, in seeking to dissolve the mighty Union which has heretofore nurtured and protected her, and from which *alone* she has derived her chiefest glory. The calm judgment of posterity, in contemplating the towering edifice of our national greatness, will be the splendid eulogy of Hume upon his country, in the closing chapter of his history: "*Threatened and actual rebellion only demonstrated paramount loyalty and patriotism.*"

\* "When they saw the flag flying on shore, the troops were powerless to cheer, but wept." See letter from that distinguished and gallant officer, Commodore Dupont, to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, dated, U. S. Frigate *Wabash*, Port Royal, S. C., November 9. 1861.

It has been shown again and again that a settled determination to break up the Union has existed at the South for many years. Yet it is no less certain that the speakers and writers of the South have sinned not only against light and knowledge, but against all their own previous convictions, repeatedly expressed and recorded. It is really curious to recall now a few, a very few, of the tributes paid in former days to the Constitution and the Union on the soil and in the very atmosphere since desecrated and darkened by the terrible opening scenes of this great rebellion. Truly, indeed, has Mr. Everett observed, that "*it is the South which has changed, not the North.*"

In a discourse delivered in Concert Hall, Charleston, South Carolina, on the 4th of March, 1813, by Benjamin Elliot, a member of the '76 Association, after stating that "the object of our Association is to aid in supporting the principles of our Government, and to teach Americans to love their Constitution *more from reason than prejudice,*" the orator reviews the causes of attachment to our Government, and dwells in grateful language on the memory of its founders. "*Such a Government,*" he continues, "*is permanent. There is a pride in protecting our own works. The sculptor would immortalize the marble to which he has given form.*"

In the same oration Britain is denounced for having "*plotted the severance of the Union,*" and the orator eloquently exclaims, "*He who can utter his emotions on the probability of this tremendous occurrence, must want the full sensibility of an American.*"

In the following year, 1814, Robert Y. Hayne was the orator of the same Association, and delivered on the 4th of July, before the inhabitants of Charleston, S. C., an animated address.

Almost its opening words are a tribute to “*our common parent*” (the Union), and an indignant rebuke to a whisper of disunion. “*But have we not heard an orator in a sister State exclaim,*” says Mr. Hayne, “*that he was ready to exchange our Government for the British Constitution, monarchy and all. The benefits of our Union have been questioned, and we are called upon to establish by reasoning, what once rested on the basis of universal public feeling. It may not, therefore, be improper, on this occasion, briefly to consider the high privileges of our country.*”

In 1818, Henry Laurens Pinckney, as the representative of the same Association, delivered a similar patriotic oration on the 4th of July of that year. Kindred sentiments pervade it throughout. “*Where now,*” exclaims the speaker, “*is the impious hand which pointed to the submission and dissolution of our empire?*”

If these were very young men at the time, of which I know nothing, at least there is no immaturity in the sentiments or language of either, but, on the contrary, a correctness and beauty, and it is very clear that they must have imbibed from good fountains.

When General Lafayette visited Savannah, in 1825, as the guest of the State of Georgia, the Mayor in his address of welcome spoke of our form of Government as “*the proudest monument of human wisdom and virtue.*” Has it changed; or have the people of Georgia changed?

The first regular toast at the great dinner on that occasion was, “*The Constitution of the United States.*” Is it not the same now?

At a 4th of July dinner in Pendleton, South Carolina, while Mr. Calhoun was Vice-President of the United States, a distinguished Southern statesman gave the following toast:



*“The State and General Governments; each imperfect when viewed as separate and distinct Governments, but, taken as a whole, forming one system, with each checking and controlling the other, unsurpassed by any work of man in wisdom and sublimity.”*

One can hardly realize now that such a sentiment was ever uttered or listened to in South Carolina; still less that *Vice-President Calhoun* himself was its author!

Among the most enthusiastic of Mr. Calhoun's admirers and supporters at that day and earlier, few men were more conspicuous than Mr. McDuffie, of South Carolina. His sentiments were identical. Hear what Mr. McDuffie said in 1821, in an Essay entitled, “National and State Rights Considered:”

*“The General Government is as truly the Government of the whole people as a State Government of part of the people. Its Constitution, in the language of its preamble, was ordained and established by the people of the United States.*

“What security, then, did the Convention, in other words the people of the United States, provide, to restrain their functionaries from usurping powers not delegated? Was it by the discordant clamors and lawless resistance of the State rulers, that they intended to insure domestic tranquillity and form a more perfect Union?”

*“The State Governments have no political powers not consistent with the Constitution of the United States.”*

Again:

“It is not, therefore, a regard to the rights of the people, and a real apprehension that these rights are in danger, that have caused so much to be said on the subject of prostrate State sovereignties and consolidated empire. It is the ambition of that class of politicians,

*who expect to figure only in the State councils, and of those States who are too proud to acknowledge any superior."*

Again :

*" We have more cause of apprehension from the States than from the General Government ; in other words, there is in our system a greater tendency to disunion than to consolidation."*

Elsewhere, in the same Essay, "OUR HAPPY UNION" is spoken of by Mr. McDuffie as comprehending "*all that constitutes the happiness of individuals or the glory of a nation.*" Mr. McDuffie soon became one of the most prominent statesmen of South Carolina, in Congress, in the Senate, and as Chief Magistrate of the State. The above are the sentiments of eternal truth. Has TRUTH changed, or have the people of South Carolina changed ?

The statesmen of Virginia in denouncing the proceedings of the Hartford Convention, half a century ago, stigmatized "Secession" as "treason." If they were right then, what are they now ?

Were I to continue the record of similar opinions, which might be greatly extended, you would be amazed, familiar even as you are with the opinions, on most subjects, of most of our leading men from all parts of the country for so many years.

There is yet one great name, that of the sixth President, whose "great relations to this entire Union," laboring as he did unceasingly for "whatever, in his judgment, was best for the interests, honor, and *perpetuity* of his country, the venerable representative of the memories of another age," I quote the language of Mr. McDowell, of Virginia, in announcing his death to the House, give to his opinions at this time the weight of the highest authority. It will be conceded that

America has produced few statesmen of more profound and universal knowledge, or of loftier and more expanded patriotism, than John Quincy Adams.

A Discourse on "The Jubilee of 'The Constitution,'" delivered by Mr. Adams before the New York Historical Society, on the 30th April, 1839, closes with an argument in favor of the Constitution of the United States so overwhelming, and of such beauty and eloquence, that it would be difficult to find, in the range of thought or expression, anything anywhere to surpass, if even to approach, it. He recapitulates his argument in eleven distinct sections, and thus concludes:

"And now the future is all before us, and Providence our guide.

"When the children of Israel, after forty years of wanderings in the wilderness, were about to enter upon the promised land, their leader, Moses, who was not permitted to cross the Jordan with them, just before his removal from among them commanded that when the Lord their God should have brought them into the land, they should put the curse upon Mount Ebal, and the blessing upon Mount Gerizim. This injunction was faithfully fulfilled by his successor, Joshua.

"Immediately after they had taken possession of the land, Joshua built an altar to the Lord of whole stones upon Mount Ebal. And there he wrote upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he had written in the presence of the children of Israel; and all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on the two sides of the Ark of the Covenant, borne by the priests and Levites, six tribes over against Mount Gerizim, and six over against Mount Ebal. And he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that was written in the book of the law.



“Fellow Citizens, the Ark of *your* Covenant is the DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE. Your Mount Ebal is the *confederacy of separate State sovereignties*, and your Mount Gerizim the CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES. In that scene of tremendous and awful solemnity, narrated in the Holy Scriptures, there is not a curse pronounced against the people upon Mount Ebal, not a blessing promised them upon Mount Gerizim, which your posterity may not suffer or enjoy from your and their adherence to, or departure from, the principles of the Declaration of Independence, practically interwoven in the Constitution of the United States.”

May the terrible conflict now raging speedily result in the re-establishment of that glorious Constitution, with all its solemn guarantees, as it came to us from the hands of its illustrious founders; and in the spirit and words of the resolutions of another of Kentucky's patriot sons, the venerable and honored Crittenden, adopted by Congress with such unanimity in July last, may the Union be restored and preserved “*with all the dignity, equality, and rights of the several States unimpaired.*”

That the patriot hosts who now swell the disciplined armies of the Union to an extent to which history affords no parallel, animated by this spirit and determination, will achieve results which will terminate in this blessed and glorious consummation, and exalt the renown of this country to a pinnacle it has never yet reached, is, I believe, ultimately certain.

Accept all I could say of cordial good wishes for yourself and the members of your family, at this otherwise happy season, and believe me,

My dear Sir, with very sincere regard,

Ever most truly yours,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

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